

REMARKS

The present application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated September 28, 2009. Claims 1, 3-11, 13, and 14, are presented for examination, of which Claims 1, 10, and 11 are in independent form. Claims 1, 3-6, 10, 11, 13, and 14, have been amended to define aspects of Applicant's invention more clearly. Support for the claim amendments may be found, for example, in FIG. 6 and the discussions thereof in the specification.¹ Favorable reconsideration is requested.

The Office Action states that the specification is objected to, as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the phrase "computer-readable program codes." In response, the specification has been amended to provide proper antecedent basis for the phrase "computer-readable program codes" recited in Claim 11. Applicant submits that no new matter has been added to the disclosure by the changes to the specification. It is believed that the objection to the specification, has been obviated, and its withdrawal is therefore respectfully requested.

The Office Action states that Claims 1, 3, 6-11, 13, and 14 are rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0003060 (*Asoh et al.*) in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0029531 (*Ohta*); and that Claims 4 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Asoh et al.* in view of *Ohta*, and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,157,465 (*Suda et al.*) For at least the following reasons, Applicant submits that independent Claims 1, 10, and 11, together with the claims dependent therefrom, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art.

¹/ Any examples presented herein are intended for illustrative purposes and are not to be construed to limit the scope of the claims.

The aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 1 is directed to a connection control method for an information processing apparatus. The method includes a reception step, a first joining step, a first inquiry step, a first detection step, a first request step, a second joining step, a second inquiry step, a second detection step, and a second request step.

In the reception step, identification information identifying a first wireless network and a second wireless network is received. The first wireless network is different from the second wireless network. In the first joining step, the first wireless network identified by the identification information received in the reception step is wirelessly joined. In the first inquiry step, one or more information processing apparatuses in the first wireless network are inquired of, to determine whether the one or more information processing apparatuses have a function of performing print processing. In the first detection step, if one or more positive responses to the inquiring in the first inquiry step are received, one or more information processing apparatuses having the function of performing print processing in the first wireless network are detected. In the first request step, if the one or more information processing apparatuses having the function of performing print processing in the first wireless network are detected in the first detection step, the print processing is requested from at least one information processing apparatus in the first wireless network having the function of performing print processing.

Notably, in the second joining step, if no information processing apparatus having the function of performing print processing in the first wireless network is detected in the first detection step or the print processing cannot be performed by any of the information processing apparatuses requested to perform the print processing in the first request step, the second wireless network identified by the identification information received in the reception step is wirelessly

joined. In the second inquiry step, if no information processing apparatus having the function of performing print processing in the first wireless network is detected in the first detection step or the print processing cannot be performed by any of the information processing apparatuses requested to perform the print processing in the first request step, one or more information processing apparatuses in the second wireless network are inquired of, to determine whether the one or more information processing apparatuses have the function of performing print processing. In the second detection step, if one or more positive responses to the inquiring in the second inquiry step are received, one or more information processing apparatuses having the function of performing print processing in the second wireless network are detected. In the second request step, if no information processing apparatus having the function of performing print processing in the first wireless network is detected in the first detection step or the print processing cannot be performed by any of the information processing apparatuses requested to perform print processing in the first request step, the print processing is requested from at least one information processing apparatus in the second wireless network having the function of performing print processing.

By virtue of these features discussed above, if the information processing apparatus requests the print processing from the only information processing apparatus in the first wireless network that has the function of performing print processing, and the print processing ends abnormally, for example, the information processing apparatus joins the second wireless network, detects another information processing apparatus that has the function, and requests the print processing from the information processing apparatus in the second wireless network.

Asoh et al. is understood to relate to a computer that can be connected to a plurality of networks (see paragraph 2). *Asoh et al.* discusses that, to use a predetermined network connection, an object may be selected from a set of objects, wherein each object includes physical and logical network configuration information (see paragraph 12). *Asoh et al.* also discusses that a network adapter can be changed when a network connection is selected, that a logical network configuration corresponding to a selected network adapter can be set up, that identification information can be registered, and that information of the selected network adapter and the identification information may be stored (see paragraph 13). The identification information relates location information to network connection information (see paragraph 14). If a notebook computer is used on a network in a home and on a network in an office, the computer can be connected to either network by selecting a location name of “home” or “office,” for example (see paragraph 15 and FIG. 10). *Asoh et al.* also discusses that a user can be prompted to enter a location name and to select a category, that a list of usable network adapters can be displayed, that a displayed network adapter can be selected, and that an IP address, a DNS server, and browser settings of a selected network adapter can be displayed and changed (see FIG. 4).

As best understood by Applicant, the computer in *Asoh et al.* does not inquire of apparatuses on any network whether the apparatuses have a function of performing print processing. Moreover, nothing has been found in *Asoh et al.* that teaches or suggests that, if no computer inquired of on a first wireless network (e.g., the home network) has a function of performing print processing or if the print processing cannot be completed by any computer requested to perform the print processing on the first wireless network, the computer joins a

second wireless network (*e.g.*, the office network) and requests the print processing from an apparatus on the second wireless network.

Ohta is understood to relate to a system for printing information at a conveniently located printer station that is selected in a predetermined area (*see* paragraph 1). *Ohta* discusses that a plurality of printer stations can be provided in the predetermined area and can be networked to a print server that stores information, that a first wireless signal can be sent from a portable device directly to the printer stations, that a positional relation between the portable device and each of the printer stations can be determined based upon the first wireless signal, that at least one of the printer stations can be selected based upon the positional relation, that information can be received at a selected printer station, and that the information can be printed at the selected printer station (*see* paragraph 7).

Ohta also discusses that a print server 13 can send a print notice signal, which indicates a requested print job, to a portable digital device 11 via a network 15 and an access point 16 (*see* paragraph 39). The print notice signal includes information indicating a requester, a desired destination printer type, printing parameters, and a print data pointer (*see* paragraph 39). Upon receiving the print notice signal, the portable digital device 11 commences a printer search process by transmitting a first wireless signal, which allows printer stations in the predetermined area to be discovered (*see* paragraph 40). If the first wireless signal reaches any of the printer stations, the printer stations respond to the first wireless search signal (*see* paragraph 40). The portable digital device 11 selects one of the printer stations, and the selected printer station establishes a wireless connection to the portable digital device 11 (*see* paragraph 40). Upon establishing the wireless connection, the portable digital device 11 wirelessly sends the print data

pointer to the selected printer station (*see* paragraph 40).

In addition, *Ohta* discusses that the portable digital device 11 waits for an e-mail print delivery notice from the print server 13 (*see* paragraph 53). If there is an e-mail print notice, the portable digital device 11 receives information including the print data pointer (*see* paragraph 53). In response to the e-mail print notice, the portable digital device 11 searches for an appropriate printer station by broadcasting a wireless signal in the vicinity (*see* paragraph 53). An appropriate printer station can be determined by a number of criteria including a location of the printer station in relation to the portable digital device 11 and print parameters provided in the e-mail print notice, which may include color information, a speed of a printer, and a number of copies (*see* paragraph 53). When a desired printer station is found, the portable digital device 11 transmits a print request signal to a selected printer station (*see* paragraph 53). The print request signal includes the print data pointer specifying an address of the print data file stored in the print server 13 (*see* paragraph 53). The printer station processes transmitted data, and the portable digital device 11 waits for a return signal from the selected printer station (*see* paragraph 53). If the selected printer station returns a print complete signal, the e-mail print notice is deleted (*see* paragraph 53).

The portable digital device 11 is not understood to inquire of a printer station on the wireless network whether the printer station has a function of performing print processing. Instead, the portable digital device 11 is understood to use the first wireless signal to inquire of a printer station whether the printer station currently is operating on the wireless network. Moreover, nothing in *Ohta* teaches or suggests that, if no printer station in a first wireless network has a function of performing print processing or if the print processing cannot be

completed by any printer station on the first wireless network, the portable digital device 11 joins a second wireless network and requests the print processing from a printer station on the second wireless network.

In summary, Applicant submits that a combination of *Asoh et al.* and *Ohta*, assuming such combination would even be permissible, would fail to teach or suggest a method that includes a “second inquiry step of inquiring, of one or more information processing apparatuses in the second wireless network, whether the one or more information processing apparatuses have the function of performing print processing, if no information processing apparatus having the function of performing print processing in the first wireless network is detected in the first detection step or the print processing cannot be performed by any of the information processing apparatuses requested to perform the print processing in the first request step,” a “second detection step of, if one or more positive responses to the inquiring in the second inquiry step are received, detecting one or more information processing apparatuses having the function of performing print processing in the second wireless network,” and a “second request step of requesting the print processing from at least one information processing apparatus in the second wireless network having the function of performing print processing, if no information processing apparatus having the function of performing print processing in the first wireless network is detected in the first detection step or the print processing cannot be performed by any of the information processing apparatuses requested to perform the print processing in the first request step, wherein the first wireless network is different from the second wireless network,” as recited in Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 1 is patentable over *Asoh et al.* and *Ohta*, and respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Independent Claims 10 and 11 include features sufficiently similar to those of Claim 1 that these claims are believed to be patentable over the cited art for at least the reasons discussed above. The other rejected claims in the present application depend from independent Claim 1 and are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim also is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, individual reconsideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and an early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should be directed to our address listed below.

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